

PAKISTAN AND ISLAM : ETHNICITY AND IDEOLOGY

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Pakistan and Islam

There is a pervasive belief, held more widely outside Pakistan than in the country itself, that Pakistan like Israel and Iran, is one of three confessional states in the world; that, like Israel, Pakistan's very origin was to fulfil a religious ideal, to create an Islamic state and Islamic society for Muslims of India. Within Pakistan itself that slogan was proclaimed most stridently by the Jamaat-e-Islami, a fundamentalist extreme right wing party, which was aided and abetted by politically bankrupt regimes such as that of Gen. Zia which hoped, by exploiting the good name of Islam, to gain some spurious political legitimacy.

Quite apart from the fact that the Jamaat-e-Islami never succeeded in gaining mass public support, a fact that was confirmed by the fact that it was routed totally even in the few seats that it chose to contest in successive elections, its fortunes have languished even further since the sudden death of Gen. Zia, its great benefactor. What much is more to the point in the present context is the time-serving quality of the Jamaat-e-Islami's political ideology and that party's demonstrated capacity to turn it upside down, when circumstances made that more expedient. Before Pakistan was created, the Jamaat-e-Islami's ideological stance was exactly the opposite of what it now claims. Then the Jamaat had vigorously opposed the Pakistan movement and denounced its leadership. Once Pakistan was created it decided to stand on its head and for the nearly half a century since the Partition it has masqueraded as the principal thekedar, the authoritative steward, of

the so-called 'Pakistan Ideology' , an undefinable conception which it has used as a weapon with which to berate and beat down every political opponent. But behind that present image lies the truth of the fact that this was an overnight politically opportunistic conversion of faith, So much for consistency and intellectual honesty.

This is but only one of many facets of a cascade of major contradictions that underlie any suggestion that the creation of Pakistan was the result of a struggle by Muslims of India to create an 'Islamic State'. We have to face up to the glaring fact that the Pakistan movement was vigorously opposed by virtually the entire Muslim religious establishment in India. The Jamaat-e-Islami itself was then of little consequence, for before the Partition it was a small and insignificant band of religious zealots. Far more significant was the opposition by the major authoritative Muslim religious bodies in India such as the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind, the principal organisation of Sunni Ulema. It was only on the eve of Independence that Liaquat Ali Khan was able to win over a section of that great body who were to find their new fortunes in the new State of Pakistan. At another level, in terms of popular Islamic religious movements was the fanatical Majlis-i-Ahrar. A

powerful populist movement of lower middle class and poor urban Muslims, mainly of the Punjab, the Majlis-i-Ahrar was implacably anti-colonialist and equally hostile to the Pakistan movement whose leaders they denounced as stooges of the British imperialists. After the Partition, Majlis-i-Ahrar ceased to be a political party and degenerated into a tiny extremely bigoted and fanatic religious sect.

This universal opposition of virtually every significant religious group in Undivided India, indeed the entire Muslim religious establishment to the Pakistan movement and the Muslim League cannot be reconciled with any idea of religious origins of Pakistan. This is just one of many paradoxes that anyone who thinks of that the true reason for the creation of Pakistan was to establish a religious 'Islamic state', must unravel.

Our people are ignorant about these facts because there has been a systematic campaign of disinformation over more than four decades. It reached its peak under General Zia. In a recent work, entitled 'The Murder of History in Pakistan'. 1A the distinguished historian, K.K. Aziz has shown how thoroughly distorted is the presentation of our own past through the re-writing of history in Pakistan. The people of Pakistan are entitled to know the truth. The motives of the state authorities in instigating and promoting this project of systematic disinformation need to be examined and understood.

Here we have yet another paradox. The men of power in Pakistan, the bureaucrats, military leaders and politicians generally, all in truth have an essentially secular intellectual make up and few are devout practitioners of their religion. In their hands Islam has been made into just a political slogan, a mask that they must wear when facing the public. They mistakenly feel that they need this for the legitimization of power in the eyes of the masses. Because having nothing to offer to the common people by way of improving their material conditions of life and labouring under the illusion that the mass of the people are an unthinking fanatical lot who will be carried away by their insincere slogans, they wrongly believe that they can mobilise their support by resort to religious slogans. The results of successive elections have proved them wrong. But the falsification of Pakistan's history continues, driven by the unthinking political calculations

of the state authorities who organise the production and dissemination of distorted propagandist accounts of our history through the commissioning of 'approved' textbooks, controlled by a bureaucratic 'Textbook Board'. Schools and colleges in Pakistan are required to disseminate such falsified accounts of the past to their students. As a consequence of this, after nearly half a century since the Partition, we have generations of Pakistanis who have no idea whatever of the reality of our history. All they know is the fiction that is relayed to them through the state controlled educational system and the media.

What then was Pakistan movement all about, if it was not a religious movement for creating an 'Islamic State' ? The answer, in a nutshell, could be that the Pakistan movement was a movement of Muslims i.e. an ethnic movement, rather than a movement of 'Islam' i.e. a religious movement. Even that formulation needs to be qualified, for the Pakistan movement, paradoxically, failed (until the very eve of the Partition) to draw any substantial support in the Muslim majority provinces which were later to constitute the State of Pakistan. The solid base of support for the Muslim League (for most of its history i.e. until 1946, as well shall examine) lay in the Muslim minority Provinces of India, notably The UP and Bihar. The Muslim League was founded in 1906. It was not Mr. Jinnah who founded it. He was, rather, a leading figure of the Indian National Congress. It was in 1913 that he was invited by the Lucknow based Muslim Leaguers, led by Wazir Hassan, to join

them. Their motive in asking him is quite interesting. They asked him because of the enormous standing and prestige that Mr Jinnah had in the Congress with which the League leadership had decided to build closer links. It was later that Mr. Jinnah reassessed the situation and recognised the value of an organised Muslim constituency and a role for himself as their spokesman, though that was for a long time with him still within the Indian National Congress of which he remained an active and influential member.

For nearly four decades the Muslim League failed to make any significant impact in the Muslim majority areas which were dominated by feudal landed magnates (indeed by a coalition of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landlords). The main political support of the Muslim League, it will be argued here, derived mainly from the job-seeking educated urban middle classes and professionals (whom we have designated as the ' salariat', although at one stage the Muslim landed magnates of the UP, fearful of radical politics that were developing within the Congress with its commitment to land reform, decided to back the Muslim League as a political counter to the Congress but without fully understanding where the Muslim League politics would ultimately take them.

In the 1920s, following the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, Hindu and Muslim landlords were allied under the 'Agriculturist Party' (similar to the Unionist Party of the Punjab). It was the coming of the Government of India Act, 1935 that changed the political equation and with the parallel radicalisation of the Congress with its commitment to land reform, the landed magnates in the UP looked for other options. They decided to join communal organisations, the Hindu Mahasabha, or the All India Muslim Conference or the Muslim League. Behind the rivalry of the Muslim Conference and the Muslim League lay the rival ambitions of Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, who set up the Muslim Conference, to displace Mr. Jinnah as the legitimate spokesman of the Muslims of India. Though the loyalties of the landed magnates were thus much divided, the Muslim 'salariat' stood solidly with the Muslim League.

How did this organisation of a minority of Muslims of India suddenly become successful in founding a new State ? For an answer to that question we must examine rather closely developments that took place in the later war years, the changing hopes and fears of various classes of people, not least the landed magnates, as the prospects of Independence appeared over the horizon. The year 1946 was the decisive when the destiny of the Muslim League was finally settled. That year was a true turning point. Forces based in the Muslim majority provinces that had so far opposed the Muslim League, suddenly changed their colours and turned completely round. It might appear, on the face of it, that they now chose to follow Mr Jinnah and the Muslim League into Independence. The truth of the matter was the new converts, the feudal lords, did not just join the Muslim league. In reality they took it over. We have to examine the implications of this for the fate of

Pakistan that was newly created, its founding father a dying man.

What do we mean when we say that the Pakistan movement was at its weakest in all the Muslim majority provinces of India. Take the situation in the Punjab. There the

dominant ruling Party was a secular alliance of landed magnates, Muslims, Hindu and Sikh together, in the shape of the Unionist Party. The Unionist Party was a political alliance of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landowners. Its founder and famous leader was Sir Fazli Hussain, a Muslim. But Sir Fazli Hussain's right hand man was Sir Chhotu Ram, a great Hindu landowner. The third main figure in that ruling triumvirate Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, the leader of Sikh landed interests.

The Muslim League in the Punjab did have some famous figures associated with it, notably Mohammad Iqbal. These were mainly urban professionals, and members of the 'salariat' (see page 6 ff.), the educated classes that look to access to government jobs for their upward advancement. But, as a group they were merely a handful and weak and ineffective in the political arena. They were patronised by Sir Fazli Husain who at the same time despised them. That Party remained the unchallenged ruling Party in the Punjab until the eve of the Partition, with only a few defections to the Muslim League; but such defections increased rapidly as the prospects of Independence drew over the horizon. The politically more astute and, in terms of recognition of their class interests, far sighted landlords such as Mumtaz Daulatana and Nawab Mamdot, saw the need to change horses earlier than many others. Ultimately, by that fateful year 1946, most of them accepted the change

of tactics to preserve the long term interests of their class by joining the Muslim League and taking over the new state of Pakistan, which was to be the guarantee of their survival as a landlord class which was threatened by the Congress commitment to land reform.

Likewise in Sindh, the provincial government were in the hands of changing coalitions of Muslim and Hindu landlords working together, their social background being much the same that of the Unionists in the Punjab. In the Sarhad (NWFP), there was in fact a Congress Government in power until mass arrests of all Congressmen during the war, which temporarily gave some room for groups of Khan's to play politics for a while, manipulated by the British Governor, Sir George Cunningham. In Bengal, there was a more radical coalition of Muslim and Hindus in power, under the banner of the secular Krishak Proja Party, in which all religious communities stood together. Led by A.K. Fazlul Haq, their main demand that united them was for abolition of Zamindari. Not surprisingly Zamindars of Bengal both Hindu and Muslim, were lined up together against them, even if they belonged to different Parties. These included Nawab Salimullah of Dacca whose name is associated with

the founding of the Muslim League. It would be a mistake to read too much into that for soon after its founding conference the leadership of the League passed into the hands of the urban professionals and the salariat, mainly of the UP and Bihar. Of this

too more later. Finally, Baluchistan was ruled directly from the centre and the people of Baluchistan had no voice in national struggles.

If we reflect on the fact that the main strength of the movement led by the Muslim League came not from the Muslim majority provinces but, instead, from the Muslim minority provinces of India, notably the UP and Bihar, we are faced with yet another paradox. If we think of the Pakistan Movement as one that was aimed at creating a separate state for the Muslims of India, that could be constructed only out of the Muslim majority provinces of India; but initially at any rate, they gave little support to the movement. What we need to ask what that offer to Muslims of the minority provinces? Given the fact that the main beneficiaries of the Partition were bound to be Muslims of the Muslim majority provinces what was in it for the people of UP and Bihar who were prepared to sacrifice themselves and their families and their future for it? What was the motivation that drove them behind a movement that offered so little to those who were bound to be

left behind in India. True, a few of them managed to migrate to Pakistan, though under conditions of great hardship and heartbreak, to found a new future and new fortunes. But still India remains a country with the largest Muslim population and the creation of Pakistan the Muslims of UP, Bihar and other Muslim minority provinces of India. The Partition has solved no problems for those who were left behind, the majority of them. What motivated them therefore to back the Pakistan movement far more strongly than the Muslims of Muslim majority provinces.

If we were to answer this question by saying that their motivation was purely ideological, that they were carried away by a movement of 'Islam' and practical considerations did not matter, at first sight that may sound to be a plausible answer. No doubt those who wish to represent the Pakistan movement as a religious movement, committed to 'Islamic Ideology' (however that may be defined) might seize on such an argument. But if we examine the argument closely, we soon find ourselves bound up with yet more questions and contradictions. Such an explanation would be undermined by the fact that the main bases of the Muslim religious establishment that were located precisely in the Muslim minority provinces were implacably hostile to the Pakistan movement and its 'westernised' leadership. On the other hand, the educated Muslim government job-seekers and professionals, the Muslim 'Salariat' (see page 6ff.) who had lined up behind the Muslim League, with very few

exceptions, could hardly be said to have been deeply moved by religious motives. They certainly did not allow themselves to be guided in this matter by the Islamic religious establishment. The notion that the Pakistan movement was motivated by

'Islamic ideology' cannot be sustained on the basis of evidence and reason. This points to some issues to which we shall come later, that need to be examined much more carefully than has so far been done.

Some Alternative Theories of the Origin of Pakistan

We have begun by recognising that the Pakistan movement was not motivated by an Islamic ideology, a proposition that we shall examine more fully below. There are other alternative explanations, of the Pakistan movement which too we will examine in the course of our analysis as we proceed. We shall find that most of them too have no more substance than the one that we have mentioned above. At this stage we might see what these alternative explanations are.

After the 'Islamic Ideology' thesis, a second argument, that we may consider is one that has been much favoured by Indian Nationalist historians and which was also the official position of the Communist Party before 1942 (when it changed its mind and decided to support the Pakistan movement) and once again after Independence when the CPI again changed its mind and resumed its original argument, is that the Pakistan movement was a movement of Muslim 'feudal' landlords who were hand in glove with the British colonial rulers. They suggest that the Movement was instigated and fostered by the British who hoped thereby to divide the Indian nationalist movement - Divide and Rule ! As we proceed to examine the facts, we will find that this theory too is misconceived and slurs over many facts and aspects of a complex history.¹

There is a third explanation of the Pakistan movement. It was adopted by the Communist Party in 1942 (when it decided to support the Pakistan movement and tried to push for 'Congress-League Unity' via 'Gandhi-Jinnah talks'). This position lasted until Independence when its position was again reversed. This was also the 'Soviet' official view from 1942 onwards and continued through the years unchanged, unlike that of the CPI. This view that the Pakistan movement was a movement of the (weak) Muslim national bourgeoisie and therefore a legitimate anti-imperialist movement, deserving of communist support, in line with the stand taken by Lenin at the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1921.² This view was reiterated by Soviet scholars, notably in the widely available work of Yuri Gankovsky and Gordon-Polonskaya on the History of Pakistan.³ They produced names of a few prominent Gujarati Muslims from a business community background who were associated with peripherally the early Muslim League, to support their argument. That view is also mistaken. The predominantly Gujarati Muslim trading communities of

India, barring one or two individuals, took little part in the Muslim movement, which was dominated, above all by Muslim professionals and the salariat (see below) of northern India, especially of the UP and Punjab. The Gujaratis were isolated from them linguistically and culturally as well as politically and had no objective class interests of their own that the Muslim movement could then serve. There were a few individuals, especially professionals, drawn from Gujarati business communities, notably Mr. Jinnah himself, a rich and successful lawyer son of a not too successful trader, who did play a part in the Muslim movement. But from this we cannot infer class involvement.

Muslim State and Islamic State

The irony of the argument that Pakistan was founded on religious ideology lies, if we may repeat the point, in the fact that every group and organisation in the Sub-continent of India that was specifically religious, was hostile to Jinnah and the Muslim League and had strongly opposed the Pakistan movement. Fore most amongst them was the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind, the leading organisation of the so-called 'Deobandi' Ulema, whom we might categorise as Islamic Traditionalists. A great deal of effort was devoted by the Muslim League leadership to win them over and eventually they succeeded in that, though only partially, on the eve of the Partition, by winning over a section of them led by Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, who formed the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam. Likewise, the Islamic Fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami, led by Maulana Maududi, was no less opposed to the Pakistan movement, although since the Partition they have gone to great lengths to conceal or

explain away their earlier stance. Again, the Nationalist Muslims who were in the Indian National Congress not only included secular minded figures like Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, but also, and especially, Muslims educated in the classical tradition who were deeply religious such as their leader Abul Kalam Azad who was steeped in Muslim classical and religious learning.

This was in contrast to the modernist education and style of life and aspirations of the Muslim League leadership. A claim that the creation of Pakistan was a fulfilment of millenarian religious aspirations of Indian Muslims would therefore stand in contradiction to the alienation of the principal bearers of the religion of Islam in India from the Pakistan movement and, contrary-wise, the explicit commitment of the leaders of the movement to secular politics. These apparently contradictory aspects of the history of Pakistan are over looked by scholars, mostly foreign, who are mesmerised by the spectre of militant fundamentalist Islam arisen throughout the 'Muslim world'.⁴ In Pakistan itself history has been systematically rewritten and

ideologists of the regimes in power have spared few efforts to present the Pakistan movement as a fundamentalist religious movement.

A Theory of 'Ethnicity' in Colonised Societies

With an Agrarian Production Base.

My contention is that the Pakistan movement was neither a millenarian ideological movement devoted to the realisation of an Islamic state nor was it a movement of feudal landlords nor yet again a movement of an emergent Muslim national bourgeoisie, although it is true that by 1946 the Muslim League reached an accommodation with the landed magnates who ruled over Sind and Punjab, but on their terms. We shall examine their specific role. It will be argued that central driving force behind the Muslim movement was a class that has a distinct place in colonised societies whose role needs to be recognised more fully and explicitly. I have labelled that class as the 'salarial', the urban educated classes who qualify for employment in the colonial state. With them we may take the new professionals, especially lawyers, journalists and urban intellectuals generally who share many of the problems and aspirations of the salariat.

In a nutshell the argument of this paper is, to repeat, that the Pakistan movement was a movement of Muslims rather than of Islam; a movement in which diverse Muslim ethnic groups from different regions, representing different social strata and interests, were allied in pursuit of quite material objectives. At the centre of that movement was a coalition of the emerging Muslim salariats of different regions of India. That coalition was to break down as soon as Pakistan was created and the Muslim movement had outlived its purpose. Moreover, that temporary and precarious alliance did not include all Muslims of India all the time, for Muslim nationalism was at its weakest in the Muslim majority provinces, having little appeal to the rural classes. Even for those who were drawn into the movement, there was no automatic nor permanent translation of the attribute of Muslim by faith or Muslim by descent, into an enduring conception of an undifferentiated Muslim

nation. On the contrary, the central axis of Pakistan's political history has revolved around strident affirmations of regional and linguistic ethnic identities that have refused to be set aside, de-legitimised and dissolved by slogans of Islamic ideology or claims of 'Muslim' nationhood raised on behalf of the dominant ethnic groups.

Comprised of diverse groups, both regionally and socially, the unity of the movement that ultimately resulted in the creation of Pakistan was a precarious one. Jinnah's political genius lay precisely in his ability to orchestrate a loose, volatile and unpredictable coalition of forces. He is generally pictured as a man with a firm and total grip over the groups that he was leading. But that is a myth, made plausible by his powerful and commanding personality. In reality his hold over the various groups was quite tenuous and he had to take them on their own terms. He merely stood at the centre of a political process around which diverse regional groups revolved, over whom he had little control.

By the late 1940s, as Independence, very likely to be inherited by the Indian National Congress, was clearly on the horizon, Jinnah and the All India Muslim League provided the predominantly rural magnates of the Muslim majority provinces (notwithstanding the fact that hitherto they had been united with Hindu and Sikh landlords and organised in right-wing 'secular parties, such as the Unionist Party of the Punjab) a convenient voice and hopefully influential voice at the centre of Indian politics, in the dialogue with colonial masters about the fate of independent India, as well as the Indian National Congress their main rival contender. The landed magnates were quite cynically prepared to make use of Jinnah and the All India Muslim League for that purpose. That supported the illusion of a unified Muslim nation in India. But it was a marriage of convenience, for the provincial magnates on whom Jinnah depended for support and his own legitimacy, were not

prepared to surrender their local power and autonomy. It was they, rather than the central leadership of the Muslim League, who dictated the terms of their mutual alliance. Nevertheless the idea of a Muslim nation gained temporary currency and Jinnah became the embodiment of that conception. The Pakistan movement, in that sense and to that extent, became a national movement, on the basis of the 'Two Nation Theory' that Jinnah propounded, affirming that Muslims of India were a separate nation from Hindus. Insofar as their politics entailed the establishment of their own state, their objective was the creation of a 'Muslim state', as a nation state; they did not seek an 'Islamic state', as a theocratic conception.

The Muslim Salariat and Muslim Ethnicity

I will argue here that there was one particular social group for whom, more than any other, the conception of Muslim' nationhood (and not religious ideology) was particularly meaningful. That class was the product of the colonial transformation of Indian social structure in the 19th century and it comprised those who had received an education that would equip them for employment in the expanding colonial state

apparatus as scribes and functionaries, the men (for few women were so employed) whose instrument of production was the pen. For the want of a better term I have referred to them as the salariat. The term 'middle class' is too wide and 'petty bourgeoisie' has connotations, especially in Marxist political discourse, that would not refer to this class.

The 'salariat' is an 'auxiliary class' (a concept that must be distinguished from that of a 'ruling class') whose class role can be fully understood only in terms of its relation to 'fundamental classes' (from which the 'ruling class' is drawn); i.e. the economically dominant classes viz. the economically dominant metropolitan and indigenous bourgeoisies and the land owning classes on the one hand and, and the subordinate classes, the proletariat and the peasantry on the other. Given a particular configuration of class forces in the state and society members of the salariat attach themselves to 'fundamental classes' by virtue of their own personal 'class origins' or through 'class affiliation' by virtue of its need and willingness to serve an economically dominant class for career considerations regardless of their individual class origins. . An example of such careerism can be seen in the willingness of the Indian and Pakistani salariat to serve

anti-national purposes of foreign (metropolitan) bourgeoisies at the cost of the nation that they purport to serve.

The 'salariat' looms large in colonial societies because there the bulk of the population is rural and agricultural. In the absence of a significant number of people clustered around urban industrial activities, and leaving aside a small number of people engaged in petty trading or in the relatively tiny sector of export trade and finance, the urban society revolves mainly around functionaries of the state, and the educated look primarily to the Government for employment and advancement. In some contexts it would be useful to distinguish between different levels of the salariat, for its upper echelons, the bureaucratic and military oligarchies, play a role that is qualitatively different from that of its lower level functionaries. The relative weight of upper echelons of the salariat in the political process vis a vis elected political representatives, is the greater the lower the level of development of the society in question. It is very prominent in

many societies of Africa, for example, as it is in Pakistan which has been ruled over by a military bureaucratic oligarchy since its inception, with only a temporary interruption during the rule of the Pakistan People's Party for barely five years. It is less so in post-colonial India which has experienced relatively higher levels of economic and political development, though even there it has not failed to make its mark. The salariat not only serves the economically dominant classes in the colonial

and the post-colonial state but it also has its own specific interests by virtue of its particular structural location and its powers, privileges and opportunities for corruption as the 'governing class' in the post-colonial state. In the relatively backward post-colonial societies the upper echelons of the salariat, the bureaucracies and the military, come into their own, by virtue of their direct grip over the state apparatus, in the absence of

institutional structures of democratic political control. This is a striking feature of the political scene of Pakistan. 5

It was the Indian salariat and professional classes who were at the core of the Indian nationalist movement in its early stages during the late 19th century, demanding a rightful place for Indians in the state apparatus, for 'Indianisation' of the services and the creation of popular institutions of representative government through which they could have a share in the exercise of power, or at least some measure of control over the state in the name of 'self-government'.⁶ It was only later that the Indian bourgeoisie threw in its weight behind the nationalist movement and Indian nationalism mobilised wider sections of the Indian people.

Jinnah's 'Two Nations' theory expressed the ideology of the weaker Muslim 'salariat' vis-a-vis the dominant high caste Hindu salariat groups. The Muslim salariat was central to the Pakistan movement. However, in a society in which the rural votes predominate and are controlled by landed magnates, the Muslim salariat could make little progress in elections until it reached an accommodation with the rural magnates by the late 1940s. That was a fragile alliance, founded on temporary calculations of mutual interests. In the Punjab there was a wide gulf between the urban Punjabi salariat and the rural magnates. In Sindh there was no ethnic Sindhi Muslim salariat to speak of.

The alliance between the landed magnates of the Punjab and Sindh and the Muslim salariat, such as it was, was effected between its national leadership, Jinnah and the All India Muslim League, who had something to offer to the regional power holders by way of ensuring that the post-independence government would not be in the hands of the Congress Party but rather a party that was dependent on them which would therefore ensure their own survival as a class.

In contrast to the character of the alliance between the rural magnates of Punjab and Sindh and the organisation of the Indian salariat, the All India Muslim League, that between the salariats of Bengal and Sindh in the post-Partition regional ethnic

movements in Bengal and Sind with the respective rural power-holders, was quite different. In both these cases there was an 'organic alliance' or bond between the respective salariats and the dominant rural classes of these provinces. The ethnic Bengali and Sindhi salariats, respectively, were the sons of well to do peasants and landlords big and small. The interests of these salariats were, through kinship, organically linked with those of the landed classes of the provinces. Such organic ties are often overlooked when questions of class formation and class alignment are considered entirely in the abstract, when classes are thought of as wholly separate segments of the population.

The Muslim salariat was not evenly distributed in size and influence in different parts of India and its future fragmentation was written into the pattern of its uneven development. If we take the numbers of persons of over 20 years of age who were literate in English as an index of their size, we get the following picture:

ENGLISH LITERATES OVER 20 YEARS OF AGE

AMONG MUSLIMS AND HINDUS (Census, 1931)

TOTAL POPULATION (IN MILLIONS)

U.P Punjab Bengal Sindh

Total: 48.4 28.5 51.0 3.9

Muslims 7.2 14.9 27.8 2.8

Muslims % (14.8%) (52.4%) (54.5%) (72.8%)

LITERATES IN ENGLISH OF 20 YEARS AND OVER (IN THOUSANDS)

U.P Punjab Bengal Sindh

Total: 266.0 185.0 722.0 34.0

Muslims 49.4 58.8 175.6 4.9

Muslims % (18.6%) (31.7%) (24%) (14.5%)

Source: Census of India, 1931: Compiled from relevant Provincial Volumes. The 1931 Census data are used because the 1941 Census data, the last pre-partition Census, are notoriously unreliable.

We find that as a class the salariat itself, has a propensity to be easily fractured into different ethnic groups which vie with each other for preference and privilege. Such groups are not defined and determined, once for all, by cultural, linguistic, religious or regional criteria. There is, rather, a process of definition and redefinition of ethnic identity on the basis of perceptions of the distribution of privilege and politically viable options, as they are brought into focus from one stage to the next. Thus in Pakistan Muslim ethnic identity, once it had fulfilled its purpose for the salariats of Bengal, Sindh, Sarhad and Baluchistan, have way to the respective regional ethnic identities. The newly affirmed identities are not of course, constituted out of nothing. They draw on deeply embedded cultural, linguistic, religious or regionally significant symbols around which they can mobilise popular support, symbols that can generate a powerful political charge.

Muslim ethnicity therefore was only one stage in such a process of ethnic definition and redefinition. It represented a temporary alliance of various regional groups. Its original thrust came from the Muslim salariat of the UP, where it was especially privileged rather than otherwise but where it was fast losing ground. Elsewhere the Muslim salariat was less developed than the Hindu salariat, so that the interests of the Muslim salariats could be considered to be in opposition to those of Hindus.

The Muslim salariat of the Punjab was the largest amongst Muslims, both in terms of its absolute size as well as its larger percentage share of the entire Punjabi salariat (i.e. 31.7%), though even in that Muslim majority Province the Muslim salariat share was lower than that of Hindus. This was the principal grievance that fuelled the Muslim movement there. Later, after the creation of Pakistan, the Punjabi salariat, by virtue of its much greater size and development was to occupy a dominant position in Pakistan society and the state.

The urdu speaking UP salariat was the next largest. In contrast to Punjab, historically its proportionate share of the overall salariat in the UP was greater than the relative numbers of Muslims in the UP population. But their relative position declined sharply in the 19th century. For example their share of jobs in the highest ranks of colonial service which were then open to Indians, declined from 64% in 1857 to about 35% by 1913, which was a dramatic decline.⁷ The UP Muslims had a deep sense of grievance and insecurity, notwithstanding the fact that they were still a privileged minority for

their share of the population was only about 13%. This perceived threat to their (privileged) situation probably explains the fact that the initial and the major thrust of the Muslim movement in India came from the UP.

The Bengali Muslim salariat was the largest in terms of absolute size as compared to Muslims of other provinces, although its share of government jobs was proportionately much smaller than that of Hindus of Bengal; Bengali Muslims were always an underprivileged majority. The Sind figures show how small the Muslim salariat was in that province. These figures in fact give a somewhat inflated picture of the insignificant share of ethnic Sindhi Muslims in salariat positions, as these figures include the considerable numbers of non-Sindhi Muslims who were employed in Sindh.

The conception of a unified 'Muslim Nation' of South Asia did not outlast the day of independence and the creation of Pakistan. The inter-regional coalition of the 'Muslim' salariat broke up in the new state, for a new equation of the distribution of privilege and deprivation between them became visible. The Punjabis (who were temporarily joined by an elite group from 'Muhajirs', Urdu speaking migrants from India) were preponderant in the bureaucracy and the army and were quickly perceived as the privileged and dominant group whereas the other ethnic salariat groups had less than their fair share of access to education, jobs and power.

Overnight the 'Muslim' identity, behind which they had all rallied together in the Pakistan movement, was laid aside by the regional groups and new ethnic identities were affirmed - Bengali, Sindhi, Pathan and Baluch. It must be added though that the Pathan position has been a little ambiguous after Zia's military coup d'état, in view of the relatively strong representation of Pathans in the army. Again, we find a replication of the Indian example, for now the slogan of 'Akhand Bharat' was echoed in Pakistan by a new slogan of the indivisibility of the Muslim Nation that was proclaimed on behalf of the dominant Punjabis. A person could not legitimately declare himself or herself to be Bengali or Sindhi or Pathan or Baluch, because he or she was a Muslim, and Islam was a religion of equality and brotherhood and would recognise no divisions amongst the people of the faith. It is in that context that Islamic ideology was first placed at the centre of

political debate, only after Pakistan was created, to oppose regional ethnic movements.

After Pakistan was created the slogan of Islam was adopted by the dominant component of the salariat in Pakistan. It was invoked at first only nominally. Insofar as it was included in the vocabulary of political debates in Pakistan during the first 30 years, only a few symbolic concessions were made to men of religion to make the argument look convincing. It was no more than a political argument that was used by the dominant Punjabis against the assertion of the new regional and linguistic ethnic identities of Bengalis, Sindhis, Pathans and Baluch. The ruling bureaucratic-military oligarchy, which has dominated Pakistan since its inception, had no intention, thereby, of allowing mullahs and Islamic ideologues, to encroach on their monopoly of power and privilege.⁸

It was only after the seizure of power by the Zia regime that Islamic ideology was invoked in a rather more strident manner for a new purpose, namely the legitimization of state power itself for a politically bankrupt regime that lacked legitimate authority. It has had to go much further in affirming, symbolically, its commitments to Islam than any previous regime. But the question of Punjabi dominance (Urdu speaking migrants from India who had shared that position with them gradually fell behind) has not thereby been displaced by politics of Islamic Ideology for it was recognised by opposition groups that this is only a cover for continued Punjabi domination. Ethnicity and religious ideology therefore remain closely intertwined and the various disaffected regional groups are unimpressed by the dramaturgy of religious fervour.

The Formation of the Structure of Muslim Society in India

In view of the relatively low development of the Muslim salariat in general and its uneven development regionally the question has often been asked why Muslims did not take more to education or to trade or commerce, i.e. to middle class occupations. Was that due to some peculiarities of their religion or culture or was it due, as the displaced erstwhile rulers, to their hostility to colonial rule, that systematically discriminated against them after the unsuccessful War of Independence, the Indian Mutiny, in 1857 ? Speculation along these lines most favoured by Muslim nationalist historians.⁹ But the question is better inverted and we may well ask why in pre-colonial India the urban middle classes, who were engaged in Government service or trade did not convert to Islam. This had much to do with the route through which Islam came into the Indian subcontinent.

There are clear patterns of conversions to Islam by different social strata in different regions, which have been little noticed, let alone explained, although the patterns themselves are not difficult to see. There are two distinct and contrasting patterns,

each related to the route by which Islam came to a particular region. One route of the advent of Islam was with the Muslim conquerors - though, this did not mean that Islam was therefore spread by the Sword; quite the contrary. The other route was by the sea, through contact with Arab seafarers and traders who for centuries dominated the Arabian sea. These two routes of the penetration of Islam into India had quite different effects on the class distribution and regional patterns of Islamisation. It is the resulting distribution of Muslims between different communities and regions that has constituted the context in which later ethnic movements, that we are concerned with here, were to arise.

A paradox of the advent of Islam with Muslim rule was that at the heart land of Muslim empires of India, in the Gangetic Plain, conversions to Islam were minimal. On the other hand they were maximal in the two peripheries of the empire, namely the Indus Plain, now Pakistan, and Bengal. We have no answers yet to the question why that was so, though we would suspect that there are social structural explanations to be found. The peripheries were perennially given to heresy against the Brahminical orthodoxy that ruled at the heartland of empire.

Before Islam, Buddhism flourished in the two peripheral regions of the Delhi Empires; the Indus plain and the Ganges Delta. Even after the advent of Islam, it was a dissident version of Islam that took root there rather than the orthodox puritanical version of Islam that was established in the UP, where great seminaries of Muslim religious learning flourished. The Islam of the periphery was influenced instead by sufism and was ruled over by pirs who claimed miraculous powers and made profitable business out of the credulity of their followers. It was also infused with a large dose of syncretism, much condemned by the UP based Ulema. By contrast in the UP influence of pirs and sufism was minimal.

The divergence in patterns of religious belief between the Gangetic Plain and the two peripheries is paralleled in divergence in many other aspects of social life. A study by Marriott, for example, plots the scale of rigidity and fluidity in caste ranking and ritual between different regions of India. He found greater fluidity in these the further West one moved away from the Brahminical heartland of the Gangetic Plain towards Punjab and Sindh. Marriott found such differences also among Hindu communities of these regions.¹⁰ My own work in the Punjab shows likewise that there is no social institution operating there that can seriously be treated as caste. Even in the matter of structures of kinship there are differences, for patrilineal-parallel cousin marriage (i.e. preferential marriage to father's brother's daughter or structural

equivalent) is the rule in the Indus Plain whereas, as one moves East, to East Punjab and Western UP the so-called 'Muslim'

structure of kinship gives way to 'gotra' exogamy practised by Jat, Rajput, Meo (etc.); Muslim peasants. Parallel to the regional differences in religious ideology there were also regional differences in social structure, which raises questions about the nature of the connections between the two.

If we consider the pattern of conversion to Islam along another axis, we find that there is a fairly clear class pattern of Islamisation associated with the advent of Muslim rulers. Muslim rule installed expatriate Muslims brought from Arabia, Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan as feudal lords at the foundations of their empires and many Hindu, especially Rajput, chiefs converted to Islam. Their dependant peasants 'converted' likewise. Islam was established thereby as a predominantly rural religion. It made much less headway in towns and cities. The relatively low level of conversions to Islam among urban classes suggests absence of coercion by Muslim rulers, who were quite happy to be served by Hindu officials. In the UP Kashmiri Brahmins and Kayasthas were the two main Hindu castes who have traditionally worked for the state both before and after the colonial conquest. The UP and Punjab diverge from this general rule, for there far more Muslims found

themselves in the salariat than elsewhere as descendants of those associated with the courts at Delhi, Agra, Lucknow and Lahore found their way into salaried state service. When Pakistan was created men from Punjab and the UP, where the Muslim salariat was the most developed, dominated the bureaucratic-military oligarchy. Over the years, Punjabis have acquired complete ascendancy in Pakistan.

In contrast to the UP and Punjab, Muslims had little share of urban middle class occupations in Sindh and Bengal or in Baluchistan and the NWFP. In Sindh, under Muslim rule, government service was virtually the exclusive prerogative of Amils, a Hindu community. The number of ethnic Sindhi Muslims in government service was minute. Trade in Sindh was traditionally in the hands of another Hindu community called Bhaibands, though during the latter half of the 19th century there was an influx of Muslim and non-Muslim trading communities mainly from Gujarat (including Kathiawar and Cutch) into Sindh (and Punjab). Bengal was no different, for the size of the Muslim salariat there was small and suffered much from discriminatory colonial policies. Aparna Basu notes that 'In lists of qualified candidates drawn up by the Council of Education in Bengal in the years after 1846, Muslim names are conspicuous by their absence'.¹¹ Politics of Muslims in Bengal were

predominantly based on rural classes, especially the struggle of (mainly Muslim) 'Occupancy Tenants' (de facto landowners), for abolition of Zamindari over-lordship, a cause upheld by the non-communal Krishak Proja Party led by A.K. Fazlul Haq.

Islam that came by the sea, with Arab control of overseas trade, resulted in a rather different class configuration of Muslims. (Our concern in this paper is primarily with Northern India and we will ignore for the moment the logic and patterns of Muslim conversions in southern India). In Gujarat (including Cutch and Kathiawar) on the West coast of India, Muslim conversions were mainly from trading communities, Sunnis such as Memons and Shias such as Bohras and Khojas (Ismailis) and Ithna Asharis. This seems to be closely related to the fact that the bulk of the export trade from northern India went abroad through ports in this region, which were all under Hindu rule. Arabs dominated the trade of the Arabian sea. Substantial trading communities which were engaged in export trade in Gujarat, not surprisingly, converted to Islam. The myths of origin of these communities speak of benign and tolerant Hindu rulers who did not discourage this. One can see the

functionality of such tolerance and goodwill when rival ports were competing with each other to attract the Arab trade. Contrary to the Northern Indian pattern no Muslim land lords were installed in these areas and there were no dependent peasantry therefore to take to Islam, except to the extent that the pattern was to be modified later when Muslim rule itself was extended southwards and was established in Gujarat. There was a diffusion of the Muslim trading communities of Gujarat over various parts of India, during the second half of the 19th century, when they began to move to the new expanding centres of colonial trade, like Bombay, Karachi and Calcutta and elsewhere. There was a push effect as well as a pull effect, for the development of the railway links between Bombay and Karachi with northern India short-circuited the traditional trade routes to the Gujarat ports and the trading communities there had to look for fresh pastures.

These Muslim trading communities were isolated, with respect to language and culture, from the northern Indian salariat. Moreover, these trading communities set a low value on higher education, which was functional for those aspiring for salariat positions. In terms of their own values they despised salaried employment, however eminent. Their children were expected to join the family business after secondary schooling. They missed out therefore even the politicising effects of university life. Nor were they impelled as a class into the Muslim movement which at that time had little to offer them. Their role in Muslim movements was negligible, except for one or two individuals, notably, of course, Mr. Jinnah himself who, however, had cut himself off very early from the modest background of his family and community in Karachi

and assimilated himself, as an extremely successful and very rich lawyer, into cosmopolitan upper class Bombay society.

Much is made by some historians of another exceptional case of Gujarati businessmen, namely that of Sir Adamjee Pirbhai, a Dawoodi Bohra industrialist who owned textile mills and the Matheran railway, amongst his varied interests. As a friend of the Agha Khan, he was made to preside over the conference of the Muslim League at Karachi in 1907, that is when the Muslim League had just been launched by the Muslim 'notables' and was about to be seized by the Muslim salariat who soon pushed the notables aside. Sir Adamjee Pirbhai himself was soon to get embroiled in an anti-clerical movement within his own community for which he was to sacrifice his time and his fortune. He had little interest in or time for the Muslim League. It would be a mistake therefore to read in his momentary and peripheral participation or similar participation of a very few such individuals in the Muslim movement, to imply the class involvement of the Gujarat based Muslim bourgeoisie.

There was also a much smaller Punjabi section of the Muslim bourgeoisie which likewise, was peripheral to the Muslim movement.

Islamic and Secular Ideologies of Muslims in India

There is a widespread tendency, in the language of scholars as well as in the rhetoric of politicians, to attribute political and ideological positions to 'Muslims' of India, in an over-generalised way, as if Muslims of different social strata and classes in different regions, were equally involved. That is manifestly untrue. There were sharp differences in these respects not only between different classes and strata but also between Muslim majority provinces and Muslim minority provinces.

'MUSLIM' IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL POSITIONS IN BRITISH INDIA

I 'MUSLIM' POSITIONS ('All-India - but main base in Muslim minority areas).

i. Islamic Traditionalism- (I) The Ulema I : 'Deobandis'

ii Islamic Traditionalism- (II) The Ulema II: 'Barelvis' & Pirs

iii. Islamic Fundamentalism_ - Maududi and the Jamaat-e-Islami

iv. Jamiat-e-Ahrar Anti-colonial 'nationalist' Muslims-- anti-. Muslim League

v. Islamic Modernism - Sir Syed Ahmad Khan & Iqbal

vi. Secular Muslim Nationalism - exemplified by Jinnah and the Muslim League

II NON-COMMUNAL POSITIONS OF MUSLIMS IN MUSLIM MAJORITY AREAS 4

vii. Secular Provincial Non-communal Transactional Politics:

Landlord Dominated Right Wing Punjab Unionist Party and various landlord political groups in Sind, being the ruling groups/parties in both cases.

viii. Secular Provincial Non-Communal Radical Politics:

The Krishak Proja Party of Bengal, led by A.K. Fazlul Haq, the ruling Party in Bengal; Hindu and Muslim tenants together against Zamindars.

x Secular Non-Communal Nationalist Muslims(in Congress Party)

in Sarhad, the N.W.F.P. the ruling party was the Congress under Ghaffar Khan

It was in the Muslim 'minority' provinces, especially in the UP, rather than those in which Muslims were in a majority, that specifically Muslim political and ideological movements were generated. Until the late 1940s, when Jinnah and the Muslim League managed to form an uneasy alliance with dominant groups in the Muslim majority

provinces, their politics were not even Muslim nationalist not to say 'Islamic'. They were, rather non-communal politics of landlord dominated groups and political parties.

We have identified eight 'Muslim' ideological-political positions amongst Muslims in India. In addition to the groups mentioned in the above table, there are also Shias, who are estimated to number about 15% of the population of Pakistan; some estimates are considerably greater. No reliable data are available. Shias organised the All-India Shia Conference in 1907 to rival Sunni organisations. But, given the fact that leading Shias of the UP were active in the Muslim League instead, the Shia Conference did not make any headway. Since the 1980s, under General Zia, some extremist Shia organisations have surfaced, that parallel extremist Sunni organisations. These are complex and contradictory reactions to the Government's campaign for Islamisation. Shia organisations have been influenced by the dramatic impact of the Iranian revolution, and they are demanding imposition in the country of 'Fiqh-e-Ja'faria', the Shia legal code, rather than a Sunni code. This

is obviously a quite extra-ordinary and unrealistic demand which expresses Shia fears of being forced to accept Sunni legislation. The main current of Shia opinion in the country however seems to favour the notion of a secular state.

Contrary-wise there have been equally strident demands that Pakistan be declared a Sunni Hanafi republic and the Hanafi 'fiqh', or legal code, be made the law of the land, that all other sects be declared minorities and be reduced to second class citizenship. This has led to a great deal of sectarian violence. These developments are the inevitable logical extensions of the claim made by the Zia regime that Islamic Law be imposed in Pakistan. The question is: Which Islamic Law ?' Each sect expects that its own particular version be acknowledged and imposed on the rest. Rather than promote any conception of 'Islamic Unity' this is a powerful recipe for disunity and inter-sectarian strife.

There have been numerous other Muslim political movements during the colonial period, such as Khaksars and Ahrars. The latter were extremely hostile to the Pakistan movement. We can also distinguish several sectarian divisions among Sunni Hanafis some of whom are, from time to time, at war with each other. Of these I have listed only three main sectarian categories, namely the i) the 'traditionalist Deobandi Ulema', ii) the 'traditionalist Bareilvi Ulema' and iii) the Islamic Fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami, whose beliefs and creeds are quite incompatible with each other. (see below) We may also mention two others namely the Ahl-i-Hadith who deny the validity of the four medieval schools of Islam and insist on a literal

application of the Quran and Hadith and the Ahl-i-Quran who go even further in demanding absolute reliance only on the Quran, casting some doubt on the reliability of the Hadith which was transmitted through fallible human channels and

therefore precarious. Each declares the others to be 'kafirs' or infidels. Summing up evidence taken from all major religious groups a high level judicial Committee of Inquiry (into sectarian riots in 1953), which was headed by the country's two most eminent judges, concluded as follows: 'The net result of all this is that neither shias nor sunnis, nor Deobandis nor Ahl-i-Hadith nor Barelvis are Muslims and any change from one view to the other must be accompanied in an Islamic State with the penalty of death, if the State is in the hands of the party which considers the others to be kafirs.¹²

Traditionalist Islam: The Ulema -'Deobandi' and Barelvi

The 'Ulema' (plural of alim, a man of - religious - learning) is a grandiose term, which is often used quite loosely, as for example in the results of a survey recently published by the Government of Pakistan which finds the vast majority of them to be barely literate. To be properly classified amongst the 'Ulema' a person would have been educated at a religious seminary and would have gone through the 'Dars-e-Nizami' a syllabus that was laid down in medieval India and has hardly changed. Generally, they have little knowledge of the world that they live in, nor even perhaps of the world of Islam except for myths and legends. They inhabit little temples of their own uncomprehending and enclosed minds in which they intone slogans, petrified words and dogmas. Affairs of state and society are, generally, beyond their narrowed vision. There are only a few amongst them who have had the benefit of some tolerable education and who, in their own ways, try to follow current affairs.

The Ulema of the Sunni Hanafi Mazhab, as mentioned above are themselves divided into warring groups of whom the two main are popularly known as the 'Deobandis' (after the great seminary at Deoband) and 'Barelvis', after the town of Bareilly in the UP, which was the seat of their mentor Maulana Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi. Deobandis and Barelvis differ in many respects, by virtue of their different doctrinal positions, the different classes (and regions) amongst whom they have influence and their different political stances. The hallmark of Deobandi Ulema in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was their unremitting anti-colonialism. Barelvis Ulema and Pirs, unlike the Deobandis, were not involved in anti-colonial ideology and struggle. On the contrary, most of them, with few exceptions, supported the colonial regime and, were in turn, favoured by it.

The 'Deobandi' Ulema

It took the Deobandi Ulema many decades of British rule before they began to show their eventual deep resentment against it. One should add, parenthetically, that the label Deobandi is not wholly appropriate here, except for brevity, for the eponymous Dar-ul-Uloom at Deoband was not founded until 1867. Very few of these worthies played a part in the Wahhabi movement of the early 19th century which was led by men of the sword, the last defenders of Indian feudalism, rather than the dispensers of law. Be that as it may the belated hostility of these Ulema to British rule was derived from changes that were being brought about during the middle decades of the 19th century by the colonial state, that directly impinged upon their lives and livelihood.

There were three contexts in which the changes impinged upon them. Firstly, in pre-colonial India Muslim Ulema and Hindu Pandits played a central role in the judicial system and held lucrative and influential positions. That continued in the early years of colonial rule. But soon a new legal system was being established to meet new needs of the expanding colonial capitalist economy. The old feudal dispensations were no longer appropriate. Along with the new laws and new types of courts to adjudicate them, a new class of English educated lawyers and judges took over from the Ulema and they were pushed out of their influential high status and lucrative jobs. Secondly, the Ulema were also being pushed out of the educational system. That process was a bit more slow, though that was not because the colonial regime spared any efforts to speed it up. Indian clerks were needed who would be educated along lines that would prepare them for service in the apparatus

of colonial government. The traditional schools run by Ulemas (and Hindu Pandits), with their emphasis on classical learning, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit, were no longer suited to that purpose. They were replaced by new Anglo-vernacular schools, with the active sponsorship and support from the colonial state. The hostility of the Ulema to the colonial regime no doubt owed much to these bread and butter questions, although it was expressed and legitimised in terms of moral outrage. A third factor underlying the anti-colonialism of the Ulema was the plight of Indian weavers, the Julahas, who were their most fervent followers. Indian weavers, once the most prosperous of the Indian artisan classes, were devastated by the colonial impact and consequent destruction of Indian textile manufacturing. Julahas, were therefore amongst the most embittered opponents of colonialism. They became extremely bigoted and developed an uncompromising attitude towards the

West. The Ulema's outlook reflected that also.

All these factors bound the Ulema to the Indian nationalist cause. They never argued for the setting up of an 'Islamic' state nor a Muslim state. Quite the contrary. They

called upon Muslims to join hands with their Hindu brothers in the patriotic cause against foreign rule. To rationalise that position they put forward a theory that constituted an essentially secular public philosophy. They separated the domain of faith, as a private domain, from the public domain of politics and government. This was formulated quite explicitly by Maulana Hasan Ahmad Madani of Deoband who argued that:-

(i) faith was universal and could not be contained within national boundaries but

(ii) that nationality was a matter of geography and Muslims were bound to the nation of their birth by obligations of loyalty along with their non-Muslim fellow citizens.

Hindus, Muslims and members of other communities would live together in harmony in independent India which, although not 'dar-ul-Islam', as it would be under Muslim rule was, nevertheless, 'dar-ul-aman', the land of peace, where Muslims would be guaranteed freedom to practice their faith, where it would be the duty of Muslims to live as loyal and law abiding citizens. It was the duty of the Muslim in India to fight with a sense of dedication for the freedom and independence of his country quite as much as he was obliged to fight for the liberty of his conscience and the sanctity of his faith. The political philosophy of the Ulema was a peculiar amalgam of pan-Islamic ideas and Indian nationalist ideas which were fused in their anti-imperialism.¹³

That contradictory amalgam of ideas came together in the Khilafat Movement (1919-23) in the aftermath of the First World War, which was the climactic moment in the political struggles of the Deobandi Ulema. The aim of the movement, was to resist the removal of the Ottoman Caliph from his high office. It was a bizarre movement of religious obscurantism that unleashed rabid and atavistic passions among Indian Muslims. It ran counter to the aspirations of Turkish and Arab nationalism. It was strongly disapproved by Jinnah. But, ironically, it was backed by Gandhi, leader of secular Indian Nationalism! The movement promised to isolate the Muslim salariat leadership from Muslim masses by arousing their fanatical passions behind a hopeless and anachronistic cause. In 1919, under the leadership of Deoband and in the wake of the Khilafat movement, the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind was formed as the political organisation of the Deobandi Ulema. It was during that

movement, that they made their biggest, though somewhat brief, impact on the Indian political scene. But they left behind a bitter legacy of narrow communalism especially amongst some sections of the Muslim urban subordinate classes. In the late 1940s the Muslim League made great efforts to win over the Ulema to the Pakistan cause. They

eventually succeeded in November 1945, when Pakistan was already in prospect, in winning over a breakaway group from the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Hind to form the Jamiat-e-Ulema-Islam which has established itself as a political party in Pakistan.

Barelvi Ulema and Pirs

In contrast to the Deobandi Ulema, Barelvīs profess a more populist Islam, more infused with superstition, and also syncretism, that make up the religious beliefs of the peasantry. Barelvi version of Islam emphasises belief in miracles and powers of saints and Pirs, worship at shrines and the dispensing of amulets and charms, which are all condemned by Deobandis as un-Islamic. Deobandis and Barelvīs detest each other and much sectarian conflict consists of fights between the two Pirs or Sufi shaikhs, play an important part in the religious life of the peasantry. Barelvi Islam is closely tied to devotion to pirs and belief in their powers of intercession (wasilah), whereas Deobandis emphasise personal redemption by rigorous performance of religious ritual and avoidance of sin. However, in the course of extended research in Punjab villages I found that the peasant makes a clear distinction between the powers of the spirit of dead Pirs and those of living

Pirs. He goes to shrines of dead Pirs and prays for his intercession for a variety of purposes. He believes that the spirit of the dead Pir can hear him so that he communicates with him directly and has no need for intermediaries. He may show some deference but not too much reverence for the Sajjada Nashins, the guardians of the shrines, who are usually descendants of the dead saint. The Sajjada Nashins are credited by scholars to have spiritual powers. But the peasant himself does not seem to recognise that. Propositions in the literature about powers of the Sajjada Nashins over the peasant,¹⁴ not least in the political arena, are a complete myth which cannot survive close scrutiny in the light of observation of what actually goes on. Where Sajjada Nashins do play a role in local level politics, as they often do, they do so by virtue of their rather more material powers as landowners rather than some spiritual hold that they are presumed to have over the peasants.

Living Pirs fall into two categories. Firstly there are Pirs as petty practitioners, dealers in miracles and magic, at a price. They provide amulets or anointed oil to protect the peasant from evil or specific remedies which he buys from them. Such Pirs can make barren wombs fertile, or ease the pain of incurable disease and so on. They take their lucrative business seriously and avoid getting involved in politics for, given the

factional division of local level politics, they would run the risk of losing half their clientele if they were to get politically involved. During my extended period of fieldwork in Punjab villages I came across only one solitary case where such a Pir did intervene in politics, due to some exceptional circumstances. He declared that as a man of God politics was not a matter that he would care to get involved in. But he was also able to invoke some high moral principles to explain why on that particular occasion he was compelled

to do so. In the event his intervention was totally unsuccessful. Everyone (including the Pir himself) could see who, in the event, were those that disobeyed him. The dissident group, in explaining their behaviour to me, made a distinction between the spiritual domain in which the Pir had powers and the worldly domain in which he did not, so that they were not obliged to follow the Pir's call in a matter which should not concern him.

Secondly there are Pirs of an altogether different kind who operate on a much higher level. Their relationship with peasants is not a direct one based on 'spiritual powers' but is rather a mediated one through landlords and local faction leaders who control the peasantry politically. Such Pirs have mureeds or disciples, who take an oath of allegiance (bai'a, or, in Punjabi bait) to the Pir. At the core of such Pir's coterie of mureeds are powerful landlords, village level faction leaders, and not least government officials, who together constitute a free masonry exchanging patronage and favours, which is tightly organised and controlled by the Pir. They operate with great effect in the political arena, as well as in the dispensing of government favours, through control and distribution of patronage and favours. Their mutual bonds are expressed in the language of kinship and the mureeds consider each other pirbhais, or pir-brothers. The Pir himself,

being at the centre of such a structure of 'generalised reciprocity' wields great power. But that is not direct power over the peasantry and it has little to do with religious beliefs of the peasantry. It is a myth to suppose that such Pirs, by virtue of charismatic power, have political authority over the peasants in general, although where their landlords are mureeds. Pirs may indirectly control peasant followers in the political arena. In most cases such Pirs are big and powerful landowners in their own rights and control their own peasants. Political recruitment of peasants by such Pirs therefore takes place on the basis of distinctly non-spiritual powers.¹⁵

Deobandi and Bareilvi Ulema in Pakistan

Historically, Deobandis have tended to be mainly urban and from middle and upper strata of society whereas Bareilvi influence has been mainly in rural areas, with a populist appeal. This has changed somewhat in recent decades, for Bareilvi influence

has extended to towns and cities, amongst the lumpen-proletariat (peasants in cities) and an insecure urban petty bourgeoisie. Traditionally Bareilvi influence has been weaker in the UP (with the exception perhaps of the peasantry of south-western UP) than in the Punjab and to some degree in Sind. On the other hand the main base of Deobandis was in the UP especially among urban Muslims. In Pakistan they make up a large proportion of Muhajirs, refugees from India. As an unmerited legacy of the Wahhabi movement they are also well entrenched amongst Pathans of the Sarhad (the NWFP) and northern (Pushtun) districts of Baluchistan. That influence now extends, to a certain degree, to Pathan workers and

lumpen-proletariat in Pakistan's cities, especially in Karachi; these are their storm troopers in sectarian riots against Shias and Bareilvis.

In Pakistan both Deobandis and Bareilvis have organised themselves as political parties, the former as the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) founded in November 1945 and the latter as the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) which was founded in 1948. The political influence of each is much more limited than their sectarian following. In Pakistan's first General election - in 1970 the JUI won only seven seats (out of a total of 138 for West Pakistan) Not surprisingly six of these were from Sarhad and one from a Pushtun constituency of Baluchistan. The JUP too won seven seats, all from West Pakistan, of which four were from Punjab and three from Sindh, one of them being from the city of Karachi.¹⁶ In both cases the rural seats were won not so much on the strength of religious commitment to the Party concerned but rather because the JUI candidates were allied to influential tribal leaders whereas in the case of the JUP they relied on powerful landlords and Pirs.

Before we leave the Ulema, we must take note of their respective positions on a doctrinal point of Deobandis and Bareilvis on the one hand and Islamic Fundamentalists and Islamic Modernists on the other; and further certain crucial differences between the two latter. These doctrinal positions are pivotal to the terms in which the political debate between them is articulated. That debate centres around the concept of ijtiḥād which we may translate as 'interpretative development of doctrine in keeping with the spirit of Islam', on issues that cannot be decided by a manifest and direct applicability of injunctions of the Quran or the Hadith, or a solution offered by other prescribed rules. Ijtiḥād is the final remedy and for those who would admit to the possibility of Ijtiḥād, there are recognised methods by which it may be accomplished. The Traditionalist (Sunni) Ulema do not accept that it is possible to perform ijtiḥād; as they would put it, 'the gates of

Ijtiḥād are closed'. For the 'traditionalists' Islamic doctrines, as formulated and codified by the 9th century AD, in the form of the teachings of the four orthodox

Sunni schools which comprise their received tradition and doctrine is complete and final. For them it is fixed for eternity. Instead of Ijtihad they rely on taqlid, unwavering and unadulterated application of the received doctrine. The Islamic Modernists and Islamic Fundamentalists, on the other hand, each reject this Traditionalist view of the immutability and rigidity of the doctrine of the faith, that admits only the principle of taqlid, or doctrinal conformity. Instead, they insist on both the possibility as well as the necessity of ijtiḥad, to revivify Islam in keeping with new questions and issues that arise with constantly changing conditions in the world. Their different political positions turn, however, on their different solutions to the question of how ijtiḥad may be properly

carried out, the 'fundamentalist' solution being an authoritarian one whereas the 'Modernist' tradition finds justification for the democratic political process in the search for Ijtihad.

Religious Reform Movements in India:

Background to Islamic Modernism

The colonial restructuring of India's political system shifted the centre of gravity of status and influence in Indian society from the landed gentry to the emerging salariat, members of the colonial bureaucratised state. This newly emerging class had different needs and outlook from those of pre-colonial upper classes. They began to develop a new life style and new ways and these found expression in new ideas. There was a 'Hindu Renaissance' which was followed, after an interval of a few decades by a 'Muslim Renaissance'. This time lag is usually explained by an assumption about 'Muslim backwardness' which is attributed to a variety of factors. A more plausible explanation for this time lag may lie in the fact that in places where the colonial transformation first got under way, namely the initial nodal points of colonial rule in Bengal, Bombay and Madras, the Muslim component of the new salariat was negligible in size and the new ideological

perspectives were opened up by Hindu thinkers, who were the leading elements of that new class. It was much later that these changes reached the UP, the heartland of the Muslim salariat. There Muslims were far from 'backward'. Quite the contrary is true. While the proportion of Muslims in the population of the UP was quite small, nevertheless Muslims held the lion's share of salariat positions, especially in their higher echelons. Not surprisingly it was therefore in the UP that 'Muslim Renaissance' soon got under way, with the colonial transformation of the state apparatus there.

The Hindu Renaissance in India began with the Brahmo Samaj movement in the 1830s in Bengal, under the intellectual leadership of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. There were parallel movements in the other two major centres of colonialism in India, namely the Vedic Samaj in Madras and the Prarthna Samaj in Bombay. Some social anthropologists have misconceived the nature and purport of this movement and speak of it as 'an intellectual nativistic revival' and say, as Maloney does, that 'Ram Mohan Roy tried to recover and rationalise the spiritual essence of Hinduism'.¹⁷ Such a view fails completely to understand the rather more positive and forward looking rather than nostalgic concerns of these movements. They attempted to articulate quite new ideas though in the idiom of the established religion.

An opposite kind of misconception about these movements, far more common, is that these movements simply packaged ideas imported from Europe in locally made boxes; that these are examples of mere reflection of Western ideas, a borrowing and mechanical transmission from one culture to another. Such a view seems plausible, for liberal ideas were in ascendancy in the colonial metropolis, though it would be difficult to accuse British colonial officials of being the bearers of liberal ideas which they did not consider suited to India. The diffusionist theory of transmission of Western ideas to the colonised society fails to account for the fact that the ideas that were locally produced by intellectuals of the 'Hindu Renaissance' and the 'Muslim Renaissance' in India bore clearly the stamp of India's colonial situation and the peculiar character of its social structure. Their 'liberalism' (at least formally) was not that of an ideology of free and equal

individuals, nor of laissez faire, which were the slogans of triumphant capitalism in England. It would be much more accurate to describe these new ideas as rationalism rather than liberalism. Nor were these ideas a crude import from the West, a popular but rather misguided and superficial notion that is current amongst scholars. These new ideas represented an authentic ideology of a new indigenous class, the salariat, and had its own quite specific contours. David Kopf, a perceptive scholar, referring to these movements of ideas, writes: 'Such radical notions as secularism, humanism and rationalism had to be reinterpreted to fit the Indian situation'. He points out that the new Indian classes produced a new ideology to suit their own circumstances and needs. These movements repudiated tyrannies of religious orthodoxy from sources within their own tradition.¹⁸

Islamic Modernism:

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Mohammad Iqbal

The 'Hindu Renaissance', as I pointed out above, was followed by 'Muslim Renaissance' which was pre-figured by writers and poets such as Mirza Ghalib and,

later, articulated most clearly and force fully by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in his prolific writings. Sir Syed Ahmad was pioneer and most certainly the outstanding and most influential figure of the 'Muslim Renaissance'. Sir Syed Ahmad was also a very effective practical organiser, as well as a theoretician and major intellectual figure. His role and mission in life was to facilitate the induction of upper class UP Muslims into the colonial salariat. For that it was necessary to encourage them to move out of the traditional system of education (dominated and controlled by traditionalist and backward looking ulemas). Sir Syed Ahmad urged Muslims to take instead to English and Western education that would qualify them for jobs in the colonial salariat. He also preached the beneficent character of colonial

rule and the absurdity of opposing it. His own personal life reflects the transition, of a member of the old UP aristocracy to the new salariat. He was from an noble family with long connections with Moghul Imperial rule, now less prosperous. He joined the service of the East India Company, against the wishes of his family, and rose to be a 'munsif', or sub-judge, which at the time, was about as high a position in the colonial state apparatus as an Indian could aspire to. He soon became a pioneer of a new rationalist public philosophy, but one which was expressed in the idiom of Islam. Nevertheless he was much reviled and attacked by the Ulema. Embroidered tales of his persecution by bigots have become a part of the mythology of the Muslim salariat.

It is not too surprising that Sir Syed Ahmad, the father of Islamic Modernism was directly influenced by Raja Ram Mohan Roy the father of Hindu Renaissance. As an impressionable young man Sir Syed Ahmad met Roy, who was on a visit to the Moghul court in 1831. He gave much prominence to an account of Roy's visit in his book *Sirat-e-Faridiyah*. A leading scholar on the life and work of Sir Syed Ahmad is of the opinion that 'The personality and work of Ram Mohan Roy were a formative influence in Sayyid Ahmad Khan's life'.¹⁹ It is no accident that parallel religious reform movements arose in different parts of India, amongst both Hindus and Muslims, during mid-19th century. Likewise there were other parallels such as a Buddhist religious reform movement in Sri Lanka. They all reflected similar changes in society, notably, the emergence of the colonial new salariat. It might be illuminating to think of these Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists etc. who were involved

in these new movements, as merely different ethnic components of a single class, the salariat; and therefore the respective Hindu and Muslim Reform movements as different strands of a single intellectual movement that was sweeping across India in the 19th century, expressing rationalist ideologies and a commitment to a scientific outlook of the newly emerging Hindu and Muslim salariats, even when they were expressed in their respective religious idioms.

Sir Syed Ahmad's political philosophy, as appropriate to the concerns of the emerging Muslim salariat in the UP, was cast in Muslim ethnic terms (rather than 'communal', which is a pejorative term). He was striving for numerical equality of Muslim representation in the services to that of Hindus, although in the UP Muslims were only about 13 % of the population. He argued that Muslims, as a community, were entitled to an equal share because for they made up for their lack of overall numbers by their preponderance amongst the upper classes. That view did not entail hostility towards Hindus as such, nor was it a question of religion. The issue was that of equating the two communities, irrespective of their relative size and demanding an equal share for each. This was nicely expressed in his much quoted statement that India was a bride adorned by Hindus and Muslims who were her two beautiful eyes. The bride would be disfigured if the two eyes were not

equal. It is evident that in all this Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was not equally interested in the fate of all Muslims; his concern was primarily about the fate of the class from which he himself sprang, the ashraf, or the upper class, Muslims.

Sir Syed Ahmad did not argue for a restoration of Muslim political power over India, much less an Islamic state. Nor did he want independence or democracy. His hopes were pinned on an indefinite continuation of British colonial rule for that, in his eyes, was the only impartial guarantee of protection of Muslim interests which lay in their securing numerical equality with Hindus within the Indian salariat. He was very suspicious of the Indian National Congress, and feared that independence and democracy would mean that Hindus would overwhelm the small numbers of ashraf Muslims, Muslims of the upper classes, who would then have no one to protect them. It is clear from this that Sir Syed Ahmad's political horizons were defined by the boundaries of the UP and he did not extend the logic of his argument to Muslim majority provinces where his argument could be inverted.

Education was the sovereign remedy for reversing the decline of the UP upper class Muslim society. The main thrust of Sir Syed Ahmad's writing and indefatigable organisational activity, therefore lay in the pursuit of modern education for Muslims. He founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1877 which later became the famous Aligarh Muslim University, which was to become the heart of Muslim Nationalism in India. In other parts of India too Muslim modernists, like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, were preoccupied with the task of promotion of the new education. There were powerful educational movements everywhere which worked with missionary zeal to set up modern educational institutions for Muslims.

Sir Syed Ahmad had to fight the bigoted Ulema at all levels, not least on their own ground of theology. His writings on religion were prolific and reflected a high level of scholarship. Without going into details of particular controversies one particular issue can be singled out. That was the burden of the received and congealed orthodoxy, the immutable Traditions of the Four Sunni schools, in the name of which the Ulema fought him. His counter-attack was simplicity itself, the wielding of Occam's Razor. He wiped the slate clean of the hide-bound traditions of the four schools as handed down by the Ulema over ten centuries, by declaring that they had become cluttered with accretions of bid'at (or 'innovations'), in other words misconceptions and misinterpretations.²⁰ The only alternative was to go back to the source, the Quran and the Hadith of the Prophet. By that bold stroke he swept orthodoxy out of the way and gave himself freedom to write on the

cleaned slate a new message of a rationalist social philosophy that sought legitimation by invoking the fundamental sources of Islam.

Sir Syed Ahmad's work opened the way for a liberal re-interpretation of Islamic political philosophy by Mohammad Iqbal. Iqbal attacked the dogma of the Traditionalist Ulema that the received doctrine was immutable. He passionately attacked the Ulema's commitment to the principle of taqlid, or doctrinal conformity, which he argued had ossified Islam and made it remote from realities of the contemporary world. That was the root cause of the present decline of Muslims. To revitalise Muslim society, ijihad had to be reinstated.²¹ That could be done through ijma, or consensus of the community of the faithful, which he considered to be 'The third source of Mohammedan Law (after the Quran and Hadith of the Prophet. H.A.) ...which is in my opinion perhaps the most important legal notion in Islam'.²² He argued further that 'The transfer of (the power of performing) ijihad from individual representatives of schools to a legislative assembly ... is the only

possible form ijma can take in modern times'.²³ Iqbal was quite as hostile to the decadent and obscurantist views of the Ulema as they were to his. Referring to provisions of the Persian constitution of 1906 he repudiated as 'dangerous' the idea of giving powers to the Ulema to supervise legislative activity. 'The only effective remedy for the possibilities of erroneous interpretations is to reform the present system of legal education' he added.²⁴ By that formula of securing ijma through a legislative body, he legitimised in Islamic terms the liberal principle of representative self-government, the system that the political leadership of the professionals and the salariat (though not necessarily its bureaucratic and military components) best understood and wanted to have.

Islamic Fundamentalism: The Jamaat-e-Islami

The Islamic Traditionalism of the Ulema and Islamic Modernism of Sir Syed and Mohammad Iqbal as I have suggested, were each associated with problems and wishes of certain social classes (of Muslims) during the 19th century, whose concerns and aspirations they articulated and expressed. The social roots of the new Islamic Fundamentalism of the Jamaat-e-Islami that was a most insignificant group of Muslim intellectuals at the time of The Partition, but which has gained much notoriety since then, cannot be quite so clearly identified. It originated entirely as an ideological movement and its appeal was initially limited to a small number of dedicated followers whom it offered a dream of an utopian future. It drew to itself a small band of idealists in search of a better society. Many of them were quickly disenchanted and left the Party, often joining left-wing groups and organisations. Their numbers and weight in that party have dwindled steadily. The

Jamaat was soon to get generous support from powerful vested interests for whom it began to serve a political purpose. That changed its character radically.

The Jamaat-e-Islami was founded in 1941 by Maulana Maududi, a scholar-journalist with a classical education. Maududi was an opponent of Muslim Nationalism and the Pakistan movement. But when Pakistan was created he found it prudent to migrate to Pakistan. With that his political philosophy went through a radical transformation. Maududi's opposition to the Pakistan movement was on the ground that the true vocation of an Islamic militant was a proselytising one, that Islam was a universal religion that knew of no national boundaries. After the creation of Pakistan Maududi revised the conception of his mission and that of the rationale of the Pakistan movement. He now argued that the sole object of the creation of Pakistan was to establish an Islamic State and that it was his Party alone which possessed a true understanding of Islam and commitment to bring that about.

To build an Islamic state the existing state must first be captured and brought under the control of those who, by Maududi's definition, were the only true bearers of militant and authentic Islam, namely himself and his Party. Unlike the Ulema, control of the state apparatus was therefore his first priority. His conception of the ideal Islamic State was a strongly centralised one, run on authoritarian lines, with the help of a strong and effective and dedicated army, under the authority of the Commander of the Faithful. Democracy was despised, for it gave power to the ignorant and those whose commitment, and understanding, of the faith could be doubtful. The onus lay therefore on his Party and on himself as its Guide and Leader, to take Muslim society forward to its true destiny. The Constitution of his Party illustrates this authoritarian philosophy for it demands unquestioning and total obedience from members of the Party to its Amir, its Supreme Head, namely himself. His ideas, justifying

dictatorship in the name of Islam have, not surprisingly, found much favour with some sections of Pakistan's authoritarian military rulers.

The Jamaat is not a mass Party but one with selected cadre members. Because of its shallow roots in society, the Jamaat has been quite ineffective as a political Party. The full extent of its isolation from popular support was brought home recently to the Jamaat as well as its surprised opponents, by its debacle in the controlled elections staged by the Zia regime in January 1985, for conditions for its electoral success could not have been made more favourable. All opposition Parties were under a ban and their leaders and local activists were in prison or in exile. The field was therefore clear for the Jamaat to make a clean sweep of it. But it was routed completely. The electorate voted negatively, against Jamaat candidates and for non-entities.

The Jamaat's electoral bankruptcy ought not to lead anyone into under estimating its power and influence in today's Pakistan, which are derived primarily from its symbiotic relationship with the ruling regime. It tends to function as a pressure group rather than a political Party and uses its influence with government agencies and power to blackmail and terrorise individuals to achieve its objectives. During the rule of General Zia particularly, the Jamaat acquired a firm grip over the Universities and the entire educational system, its prime objective. It also acquired a powerful influence on the government owned and controlled broadcasting media. Its tentacles extended everywhere so that its opponents lived in fear. The Party, in turn, enjoys enormous capacity of patronage and thereby attracts support from all kinds of opportunists and careerists, which further reinforces its influence within the apparatus of the Government and the army quite apart from its influence directly at the top.

After the Partition the Jamaat attracted a new following among urdu speaking refugees from India, the muhajirs, who felt insecure and bitter about India, because of their suffering in the course of their enforced migration. They responded readily to the chauvinistic rhetoric of the Jamaat. But, over the years, this support has been withering away. In part this is because muhajirs who have settled in the interior of Sindh have developed linkages with the Sindhi community, being traders and professionals who serve Sindhi peasants and landlords. They have become the 'New Sindhis', and sympathise with the Sindhi movement which has got under way quite powerfully in recent years. They dislike the anti-democratic support by the Jamaat of the repression let loose by the military regime against Sindhi nationalism. Even in big cities, like Karachi, where muhajir support for Sindhis is much less, there are elements within the Jamaat, like Prof. Ghafoor Ahmad of Karachi and Jan Mohammad Abbasi,

who are critical of their Party's support of the martial law regime because that has been losing the Jamaat popular support.

The leadership of the Jamaat has passed into non-ideologist hands, although exploitation of their ideology remains their principal political weapon. The Party bosses seem to feel that its diminishing support from its meagre popular base, mostly amongst the Muhajirs is of less consequence than the support that it is deriving from powerful classes in Pakistan for whom its value lies in its ability to bludgeon radical and left-wing groups, very often quite literally so. The Party receives generous donations from big businessmen and landlords and is believed to be a recipient of generous donations from the Americans and from potentates in the Middle East. But an excess of money and, for that matter, influence, has also brought problems for the Party. New vested interests have grown up in the Party bureaucracy and the old ideological wing of the Party, in decline, resents that. There is a considerable tension (to say the least) between the ideologists in the

Party, mainly Karachi based, and those whose political ambitions lie in what they can get from the military regime. This latter consists mainly of the Punjab based, so-called 'pragmatic' wing of the Jamaat, led by Mian Tufail Mohammed, the Amir of the Jamaat and successor of Maududi. However, to retrieve its standing amongst the people the Party has begun to voice carefully measured criticism of the military regime, to distance itself from it. There is also a third element in the Party namely armed thugs, an element that was reinforced by the repatriation from East Pakistan of members of Al-Badar and As-Shams, its fascist paramilitary organisations, after the liberation of Bangladesh. They go about beating up opponents and breaking up meetings. These elements are associated with, especially, the Islami-Jamiat-e-Tulaba, the student organisation of the Jamaat, that maintains an armed presence on University campuses.

To end our account of the Jamaat-e-Islami, we must return to the central doctrinal issue of *ijtihad*, or interpretative development of doctrine, around which the political debate about Islamic State has turned. As it was pointed out above, the Jamaat stands for *ijtihad*, contrary to the position of the Traditionalist Ulema. But at the same time The Jamaat-e-Islami derides the method proposed by the Modernist Iqbal for realising *Ijtihad* under contemporary conditions, through processes of representative democracy, which is represented as the only possible source of *Ijma* modern conditions. Maududi contends against this that this could not lead to a reliable interpretation of Islam, for the voters may not be Muslim and even if they are, they may not have a 'true understanding' of Islam, such as only Maududi and his followers are blessed with. Iqbal's exhortation to educate the people was no solution either. Scholarship was no guarantee, for even the Ulema were

misled and ignorant.

The logic of that argument, leads Maududi to an authoritarian solution, for by his lights there is only one true and reliable interpretation of Islam and Maududi and his Jamaat are the custodians of that true knowledge. They are a gifted and select elite, and amongst them only its great leader, knows what Islam is.

'According to Maududi', writes K.K. Aziz:

'there is always a person (Mizaj Shanas-i Rasool) who alone is competent to decide what the Holy Prophet would have done in a given situation if he were alive. ... He left no doubt in the minds of his followers that he was the only candidate for this supreme pontifical office. And his chief lieutenant, Maulana Islahi declared before the Punjab Disturbances Inquiry Committee that he wholeheartedly and unreservedly accepted Maududi as the Mizaj Shanas-i Rasool'.²⁵

As far as the Jamaat claims and ideology are concerned, there can be no objective or logical criteria by which their validity can be settled. They can be accepted only as an act of faith, by a religious conversion in effect, to the Maududi sect, which may therefore be properly regarded to be yet another sect of Islam which, like every sect, claims to be the only true one.

Paradoxically Maududi's elitism itself militates against a principle which would be regarded as a central tenet of Islam, namely that ijtiḥād by ijma, the consensus of the community, has precedence over ijtiḥād by the alim, the man of religious learning, because an individual, however learned he may be, is fallible, but Allah in his divine mercy would not allow his community collectively to go in error. This has always been recognised as the principle of democracy in Islam. Maududi's argument contradicts that. The Jamaat-e-Islami ideology while insisting on ijtiḥād, in effect rejects the fundamental notion of ijma, and offers little more than a personal charter of authority to the head of the Jamaat-e-Islami to lay down the law in the name of Islam.

It must be said that by virtue of re-interpretation of Islam by Ulema of the 8th and 9th centuries AD, to suit the needs of the feudal Abbasid empire, the concept of ijma was itself narrowed down to that of a consensus between 'qualified' scholars, which took away the power from the community that the Prophet Mohammad's Islam had conferred on it. They abolished the right of the community to be represented in the

state. Even today such a notion is peddled in Pakistan by the ignorant and to a degree state subsidised Ulema. Nevertheless, even this narrowed conception contradicts Maududi's claim. This is quite apart from the impossibility of 'consensus of scholars' in a world in which there are sharp and vicious sectarian differences so that those with differing persuasions call each other kafirs, as recorded by the Report of the Court of Inquiry, a high judicial body, that reported in 1954 on sectarian violence that took place in 1953, referred to in

footnote no. 12 above. So on doctrinal grounds we can see that there are contradictions underlying every position. There is no way of resolving it except by either imposing one sectarian position over all the others or by accepting a secular conception of the political process and the state so that every individual, whatever his or her religious persuasion may be, would be free to participate in the democratic process, following his or her own private faith and conscience, to shape policies of the state. We will refrain from pursuing this arcane and insoluble debate any further for it cannot be resolved by logic.

Secular Muslim Nationalism - Jinnah

Most of the salariat in fact, implicitly or explicitly, espoused a secular conception of

being part of a Muslim nation. Jinnah their spokesman, was always quite explicit about it and on this issue he put his position quite unambiguously. In recent years there has been a systematic attempt by Pakistan's captive media to misrepresent Jinnah on this point and they are trying hard to build up an image of the Father of the Nation as a religious bigot. The reality was very different. Jinnah was a member of cosmopolitan Bombay society, a close colleague and friend of Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta, a Parsi Indian nationalist and, along with M.K. Gandhi, a protégé and close friend of G.K. Gokhale, the great Indian liberal leader. Jinnah began as an active member of the Congress Party. He was not among the founders of the League. Ironically the basis of that growing unity was destroyed by a decision to pander to Muslim bigotry not by the League but by the Congress, much to the disgust and resentment of the League leadership. That was by virtue of Gandhi's

decision to back fanatical Muslim Ulema in launching the Khilafat movement, (1919-23). If there had been any intention to drive a wedge between the secular minded Muslim salariat and the Muslim masses and to shift leadership in the direction of the obscurantist Ulema, the Congress could not have taken up a more potent issue.

It is true that it was Muslim notables, so-called 'feudals', who presided over the birth of the Muslim League in December 1906 at Dacca. This has misled too many historians about the character of the Muslim League. The fact of the matter is that the Muslim League, soon after its initiation by Muslim notables, was taken over by the Muslim salariat. At the initial meeting at Dacca two leading lights of Aligarh, Mohsin-ul Mulk and Viqar-ul Mulk were appointed as joint secretaries and two-fifths of the Provisional Committee were from the UP. These were as yet 'men of property and influence' although quite committed to the salariat cause. Later, by 1910, the leadership and control of the Muslim League passed into the hands of men from a relatively more modest background who have been described as 'men of progressive tendencies', under the leadership of Wazir Hassan and others like him, who were based at Lucknow. They pushed the Muslim League in a new direction and sought co-operation with the larger Indian nationalist movement and the Congress, provided Muslim salariat rights were protected.

Jinnah himself was to be brought into the Muslim League by these elements three years later. It would be a mistake to think that the Muslim League was dominated and controlled by the so-called feudals' during the four decades after its inception. That is the nub of a complicated story, of which a most perceptive account will be found in Robinson's excellent study of the early Muslim Movement in the UP.²⁶ Naturally, like all great political and social movements there are many different strands that are interwoven in the tapestry of Muslim history in India during the 19th and 20th centuries. But its leitmotif was engraved on the map of Indian politics by the aspirations and anxieties of the Muslim salariat, the force behind Muslim nationalism.

A number of factors contributed to a new turn in the development of Muslim politics in India by the first decade of this century. The Muslim salariat was by now detached from its total reliance on the goodwill and patronage of the colonial regime. It turned towards its own self-reliant political organisation for which it looked to Muslim professionals to provide political leadership. That was prompted above all by the prospective constitutional changes that offered an opportunity and need for representation in the state apparatus. It is not an accident that Muslim salariat's political organisation took shape in that decade. Nawab Salimullah Khan's initiative and invitation to Dacca had merely provided an opportunity and an occasion for that.

The Muslim salariat had begun to crystallize its political identity. Its key objectives were, again, defined by the narrow perspectives of the privileged UP Muslim salariat, not least its sharply deteriorating position relative to Hindus. Its demands corresponded to the problems of a beleaguered group in a Muslim minority province.

They do not make too much sense when viewed in the context of Muslim majority provinces. Their central demand was for separate electorate for Muslims so that they may not be outvoted by the overwhelming Hindu majority in the UP. Robinson sums up developments in the first decade of the century as follows: 'By 1909 a Muslim identity was firmly established in Indian politics ... (by virtue of) the creation of a Muslim political organisation ... (and) the winning of separate Muslim electorate. ... The creation of a protected share of power for Muslims ... stimulated the further development of Muslim politics.' 27 Jinnah who was

brought into the Muslim League in 1913 reassessed the situation and recognised a role for himself as a spokesman for Muslims in the Nationalist movement on the strength of their independent organisation in the Muslim League. Robinson comments 'He brought to the League leadership important connections with all India Congress circles and the distinction of having been a close friend of Gokhale.' 28

Jinnah eventually began to get disillusioned with the Congress Party, from the 1920s not because he was a Muslim communalist but quite the reverse. It was the Congress, rather, which embarked on a course that encouraged Muslim fanaticism under the leadership of the Ulema, by instigating and backing the Khilafat movement. Jinnah was quite outraged by this. No greater disservice could have been done to the cause of inter-communal harmony in India. Nothing that the Muslim League ever did or wanted to do could have done more to excite Muslim communalist passions and to evoke corresponding responses from Hindus.

Increasingly Jinnah was disenchanted with the leadership of the Indian National Congress. The failure to reach an accommodation with the Congress after the 1937 elections finally forced him to reconsider his strategy. So far the Muslim League's influence was limited to the salariat; hence its ineffectiveness in elections in a society in which landlords controlled the mainly rural vote. Jinnah decided now to secure Muslim landlord support at any price and he soon set about making deals with those of them who were in power in Muslim majority Provinces, persuading them to accept the Muslim League label, even if it was to be only nominally. In return he gave them carte blanche, and in effect surrendered the local Muslim League organisations to them. Jinnah's objective in this was to secure at least the formal position of the Muslim League as the nominally 'ruling Party' in Muslim majority provinces. That would legitimise his claim that the Muslim League was the sole and legitimate spokesman of Muslims of India.

Jinnah looked upon the landed magnates, the political bosses of the Muslim majority provinces, with contempt and dislike quite as much as they in turn showed little

inclination to allow him and the central Muslim League leadership to encroach on their domains of power. In Punjab the Jinnah-Sikandar Pact of 1936 was the first of these one-sided arrangements between the Unionist Party and the Muslim League. The Unionist Party was an alliance of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landowners. In return for Muslim Unionists' nominal allegiance to the League it delivered the Punjab League into the hands of the Unionists' leader, Sir Sikandar Hayat. The political cleavage in the Punjab was urban-rural and the rural magnates had always shown contempt for the urban salariat, which was the Muslim League's mainstay. The Unionist Party, especially earlier under Sir Fazl-i-Husain, was determined to keep Punjab politics 'non-communal'. Fazl-i-Husain's closest and most trusted

associate was Sir Chhotu Ram, a Hindu. Although he was prepared to patronise members of the Muslim salariat, Sir Fazl-i-Husain and his associates had no intention of letting the urbanites, on whom they looked down with some disdain, encroach on their power. Iqbal complained of Sir Fazl-i-Husain's anti-urban bias in a speech in 1935 and his associate Malik Barkat Ali did so too; both urban stalwarts of the Muslim League.²⁹ Later Iqbal was to protest repeatedly to Jinnah about his pact with Sir Sikandar Hayat, Sir Fazl-i-Husain's successor. In a series of letters in October and November 1937, Iqbal complained to Jinnah that 'Sir Sikandar wants nothing less than complete control of the League and the Provincial Parliamentary Board.'³⁰ Jinnah maintained a prudent silence over the matter and did not reply to Iqbal's repeated letters. Having handed over the League to Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and the Unionists, there was little that he could have said.

In Sind the story was no different, for there the local base of the Muslim salariat was narrower than that in the Punjab. In Sind its size was minute. The urban leadership of the Muslim League, mainly in Karachi, was mainly ethnic non-Sindhi. The rural based ethnic Sindhi leadership was divided into warring factions led by Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah and G.M. Syed. In terms of its social composition Hidayatullah's faction was a replica of the Punjab Unionist Party. Jinnah decided to put his bets on the Hidayatullah faction which was the more powerful; but it was evidently an unpalatable decision. Jinnah confided his views about his Party colleagues to Sir Hugh Dow, Governor of Sind (which itself is an extra-ordinary reflection on Jinnah's relationship with the servitors of Empire). Dow, in a Secret letter to Wavell, the Viceroy, reporting on political developments, wrote:-

'Jinnah made a prolonged stay in Karachi ... and held prolonged conferences with the "leaders". Jinnah dislikes them all (he once told me that he could buy the lot of them for 5 lakhs of rupees to which I replied that I could do it much cheaper) and has been mainly concerned that the League ticket should go to the man who was most

likely to be returned, his previous and subsequent loyalty to the League being a minor consideration." 31

All that Jinnah was looking for was pinning the Muslim League label on the Provincial governments and little more.

It is not difficult to see the short term calculations of this strategy for Jinnah, for it legitimised his All-India position and strengthened his bargaining position. The reason for the decision of the Provincial magnates for accepting the Muslim League label is less obvious. It was not the vote pulling power of the Muslim League, for it was the landed magnates themselves who controlled the mainly rural vote. What the League offered to the landed magnates of Punjab and Sind is best understood only if we consider the fundamental shift in the long term political prospects that began to be visible to the landed magnates whose eyes were so far focused too narrowly on the provincial scene. With independence in sight, they had to look beyond their Provincial horizons and some of them could see the writing on the wall earlier than others. It was clear that it was only a matter of time before the colonial rule would end. With the departure of their colonial

patrons they were faced with the prospects of the rule of the Congress Party, with its commitments to land reform. If they were to preserve their class position, the only viable option for them was a government at the centre of the Muslim League rather than the Congress. If that was to mean Pakistan, so be it. Whatever form it took it would guarantee their own survival for the Muslim League was wholly dependent on them. It is they who would wield power in any autonomous regional grouping of Muslim majority provinces that would ensue. It was not a question of ideology but clearly understood class interest that lined them up behind the Muslim League. They were unimpressed by Muslim League politics until the imminence of independence. Only at that juncture did they decide to jump on to the Muslim League bandwagon and, in fact, took it over.

When the Pakistan slogan was raised Jinnah's opponents continually complained that he was refusing to specify precisely what Pakistan was actually to be. As a seasoned negotiator evidently Jinnah did not lay all his cards prematurely on the table. But it was not difficult to see that what he was aiming for was a grouping of Muslim majority provinces enjoying a degree of regional autonomy, possibly within an overall Indian Federal Union rather than the Partition of India, especially if that was to entail carving up of Punjab and Bengal. That he was quite happy to accept Pakistan as a regional grouping within an Indian federal union is testified by his ready acceptance of the three-tier Cabinet Mission Plan which offered just that in April 1946. It was the

Congress who rejected it. Such a solution, resulting in a weak centre, would have undermined a major objective of the Congress and the Indian bourgeoisie namely to embark on planned development of free

India; in retrospect one may well conclude that India's progress in planned industrial has justified that strategic decision. For the Muslim League, the logic of the federal union solution was particularly important for Muslims of the UP and Muslim minority Provinces, for that would have established a link between them and those in power in Muslim majority regions within the federal union. The 'reciprocal hostages' theory was premised on the idea that the fate of non-Muslims in the Muslim majority zone would be a guarantee for their own protection in the other zone in which they were in a minority. The issue revolved around the fate of communities. Pakistan, in whatever form, was not to be a theocratic state.

Jinnah had consistently opposed theocratic ideas and influences and never minced his words about his commitment to a secular state. Speaking to students of Aligarh Muslim University, the heart of the Muslim salariat, in February 1938, he declared:

'What the League has done is to set you free from the reactionary elements of Muslims and to create the opinion that those who play their selfish game are traitors. It has certainly freed you from that undesirable element of Maulvis and Maulanas' (a derogatory reference to the Ulema).³²

Jinnah re-iterated, time and again, that Pakistan would be 'without any distinction of caste, creed or sect.' Aisha Jalal, in her excellent study of Jinnah's political role, records at least two occasions on which Jinnah successfully resisted attempts to commit the Muslim League to an 'Islamic Ideology'.³³ Jinnah's memorable inaugural address to the Pakistan Constituent Assembly on 11th August 1947 was a clarion call for the establishment of Pakistan as a secular state. From the principal forum of the new state he declared:

'You may belong to any religion or caste or creed - that has nothing to do with the business of the state ... We are starting with this fundamental principle, that we are all citizens of one state. ... I think we should keep that in front of us as our idea and you will find that in the course of time Hindus will cease to be Hindus and Muslims will cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense because that is the personal faith of each individual but in the political sense, as citizens of the state'. ³⁴

There could be no clearer statement of the secular principle as the basis of Pakistan. The true heirs in today's Pakistan of what the Pakistan ideology really was, are the secularists. They include practicing Muslims, who, nevertheless, reject and repudiate the idea of exploitation of Islamic ideology in pursuit of political ends.

If Islamic Modernism was the initial ideology of the emerging Muslim salariat, it has long ceased to be a live intellectual movement and has been marginalised. It exists in small and peripheral groupings such as the Tulu-e Islam group which was led by Ghulam Ahmad Parvaiz. Many of the basic ideas of Islamic Modernism, have passed into conventional wisdom. Insofar as they still have currency, they are accommodated within secular political attitudes. It may help to put things into perspective if we quote from an account by Rosenthal, a renowned Islamic scholar, of his investigations in Pakistan, even though his report is quite old.

Rosenthal summed up his impressions of attitudes that he encountered in Pakistan with the words:

'On balance, I should say that among the academic youth there is a minority in favour of an Islamic state in substance not just in name. The Majority are divided in their allegiance to Islam from personal faith to indifference and outright rejection, as being out of date and dividing men instead of unifying and leading them to a world state'.³⁵

More recently this issue has been dealt with sensitively and perceptively by Sibte Hassan in his influential urdu book Naveed-e-Fikr, which has been translated into English with the title: 'The Struggle for Ideas in Pakistan', where he arrives at similar conclusions.³⁶

Islamic Rhetoric in Pakistan

Muslim ethnicity had outlived its original purpose when Pakistan was created, for the 'Muslim' salariat, no longer stood in opposition to Hindus. Instead a new dominant ethnic group identified itself, the ruling Punjabis. In turn, other sections of the once Muslim salariat now redefined their ethnic identities, as Bengalis, Sindhis, Pathans and Baluch, who were under-privileged in the new state. They demanded fairer shares for themselves. They had left Muslim ethnicity behind in the pre-Partition world. Now the regional question was to be at the centre of politics in Pakistan, ill-concealed by the rhetoric of Islamic ideology that was deployed against them, to deny the legitimacy of their newly affirmed separate regional and cultural identities.

There was a fresh process of accounting of regional privilege and deprivation. Although there were 41.9 million East Pakistanis, as against only 33.7 million West Pakistanis (1951 census), shares in public appointments bore no comparison to that, not even remotely. In 1948 East Pakistanis numbered only 11 % of the members of the CSP, the Civil Service of Pakistan, the elite cadre that stood at the head of the bureaucracy and controlled it and thereby the State, in Pakistan. (The CSP was later abolished by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto). East Pakistani share in the army was even worse, for only 1.5 % of army officers were East Pakistani. Bengali Muslims owned no more than 3.5 % of the assets of all private Muslim firms.³⁷ A wave of political militancy swept through the whole of East Pakistan. The Bengali language movement erupted with dramatic force in February 1952 when, for a few days, the writ of the Government ceased to run in that Province. Every Bengali

government employee went on strike. That movement, significantly, started on the Dacca University Campus. The Bengali Language movement repudiated the ruling Muslim League's claim to represent the people of East Pakistan. In the 1954 Provincial elections the ruling Muslim League Party won no more than 10 seats out of a total of 309, notwithstanding repression of opposition parties and the fact that many of the elected candidates were in prison at the time. The opposition United Front, that articulated Bengali nationalism, swept the elections. Sindhis, Pathans and Baluch movements were soon to develop likewise.

At first in Pakistan the secular tradition of Jinnah was maintained. In March 1949, moving the 'Objectives Resolution' in the Constituent Assembly, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan declared: 'The people are the real recipients of power. This naturally eliminates any danger of the establishment of a theocracy.'³⁸ Choudhury, editor of Constitutional Documents of Pakistan, a champion of Islamic ideology, complained that 'The Ulema were also not happy with the first draft constitution as it contained very little, if at all any, provisions as to the Islamic character of the proposed constitution'³⁹

As soon as the regional protest against Punjabi rule began to get under way, the ideological tune changed. Suddenly Islam and the notion of Islamic brotherhood became the order of the day. It was unpatriotic on the part of Bengalis, Sindhis, Pathans and Baluch to make demands in terms of their regional ethnic identities because all Pakistanis were brothers in Islam. The constitutional proposals were quickly redrafted. Choudhury happily reported that 'The Second Draft Constitution (Choudhry's over-enthusiastic title for the Report of the Basic Principles Committee, 1952) was noted for elaborate provisions relating to the Islamic character of the

proposed Constitution. The most noble feature of the Islamic provision was a board of ulema which would examine if any law was repugnant to Quran and Sunnah'.⁴⁰

All that this 'noble feature' added up to was a smoke-screen, for it went little beyond setting up a Board of Talimat-i-Islamia (In other words: Board of Islamic Learning) which formally had some advisory functions but, in the event was to exist only on paper, for the bureaucratic-military oligarchy (with the Punjabi salariat in saddle) which dominated Pakistan, had no intention of giving the mullahs a share in power. The only concrete result of all this, after years of rhetorical Islamisation was a decision to change the name of the Republic to 'The Islamic Republic of Pakistan' and, further, a provision was inserted in the Constitution that the President of the Republic shall be a Muslim. But these were mere symbolic gestures. The ruling oligarchy was in no mood to make any real concessions of substance to the Islamic ideologists. But, for the moment, for the mullahs, evidently concerned far more with some little material benefits than fundamental

principles of the State, all this was quite enough to keep them occupied in the business of generating rhetorical steam on behalf of the dominant Punjabis who made it plain that the 'Islamic Pakistan' would not tolerate any regional movements for autonomy or equality.

The secular mood of the country was dramatically demonstrated by the rout of 'Islam Loving' Parties in the first national election of Pakistan in 1970. The secular Awami League, predominantly Bengali, which had no influence in West Pakistan, swept the board in East Pakistan, winning every seat but one; that one seat for the Chittagong Hill Tracts being uncontested to allow its tribal leader to be elected there. In West Pakistan the Pakistan People's Party, with its secular slogan of "Roti, Kapra aur Makan" (i.e. Bread, cloth and shelter) got a landslide victory in Sind and Punjab (giving it an overwhelming majority in West Pakistan as a whole) and The 'left-wing' National Awami Party made a very good showing in NWFP and Baluchistan. The Islamic Parties came nowhere.

The Bengali movement was eventually to lead to the liberation of Bangladesh. It was the Bengali salariat which spearheaded that movement, although it had deep roots in the countryside. In a predominantly rural country (the urban population in 1960 being only about 5%) most members of the Bengali salariat were sons of well to do peasants and the landed gentry. The Awami League which spoke most volubly for the East Bengali salariat, therefor and got solid support from the rural power base. The same was to happen later with the powerful Sindhi movement that erupted with force in the late 1980s.

The ideology of Sindhi nationalism too is explicitly secular. Like the East Bengalis, the small Sindhi salariat is also backed by the entire Sindhi rural population, for they too are the sons of Sindhi peasants and landlords, big and small. The grievances of the Sindhi salariat are, however, compounded by those of all other ethnic-Sindhi classes who feel discriminated against and disaffected. Sindhi landlords and peasants are concerned about the question of equitable sharing of waters of the Indus river system between Sindh and Punjab, of which the Sindhis feel they get less than their due share. Dispossessed Sindhi sharecroppers thrown out of their traditional source of livelihood by farm mechanisation and driven to the cities to look for work, find that the Sindhi urban society, of Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur and the major industrial cities of Sindh, has become non-Sindhi. They are therefore strangers in their own cities and are denied working class

jobs which are monopolised by immigrants from Sarhad and the Punjab and the locally entrenched Muhajirs. There is therefore an accumulation of grievances of all classes of the Sindhi people. The Sindhi movement has therefore erupted with great force in the 1980s, drawing together all sections of the ethnic Sindhi people, for it is not confined to the Sindhi salariat. But despite this solid support in the country, the Sindhi movement has failed so far to realise much. Some of its weakness derives from the fact that it has failed to build a united front with the predominantly non-Sindhi working class in Sindh. This has made it relatively ineffective despite its strength in the rural areas.

With the assumption of power by the Zia regime another factor has come into play, namely the legitimacy of power (or, more accurately, its total lack of legitimacy). Afraid to face a free electorate and having no mandate to govern, the General turned to Allah. In that he was forced to go much beyond the outworn old Islamic rhetoric of previous days. He had to show to a cynical public, who had heard it all before, that he actually means business. But there was not much that he could do in practice. Being in charge of running a peripheral capitalist economy, heavily dependent financially on the US, he could not conjure out of nowhere an Islamic economy, following examples of medieval economic practices. Running a peripheral capitalist economy imposes its own rules and logic and its own imperatives that cannot be disregarded. So Zia drew the line clearly between symbolic gestures that he could make and fundamental restructuring of society that he could

not. The Banking system and financial institutions continued to oil the wheels of commerce and industry in the country. In the Act setting up Shariat Courts, under the Constitution (Amendment) Order 1980, issued by Presidential decree, to 'Islamise' Pakistan's laws, everything connected with the working of the economy was explicitly excluded from the jurisdiction of these Courts, under subsection (c) of section 203 A.

As we shall see his successors were more stupid and ignored this golden rule which Zia never announced publicly but nevertheless carefully followed namely that he must not mess about with the economy, whatever Islamic rhetoric he may employ to bolster up his illegitimate regime.

All that was left to the Zia regime to do, in the name of Islamisation, was to undertake cosmetic measures, although the word 'cosmetic' is an outrageous word to describe barbaric punishments that were prescribed under the Hudud Ordinances which were promulgated by him in the name of introducing an Islamic legal system. The regime has also launched a systematic attack, both symbolically and practically, on the status and privileges of women in Pakistan society. That in turn sparked off a women's movement which generated a force that was unknown in Pakistan's history. The only measure of the Zia regime that could properly be called cosmetic was described as 'interest free banking', the regime's pride and joy in its record of 'Islamic achievements.' Banks, instead of charging interest to customers, now had to 'buy' their customers' goods which otherwise would have been hypothecated to the bank against the loan. Simultaneously the Bank would 'resell' the

same goods to the customer, at a higher price. The mark up between the 'purchase' and 'sale' prices was designated as the 'profit' of the Bank that it would receive in lieu of interest ! This was, one might say, Islamisation by semantic jugglery, for what in effect was interest continued to rule under its new designation: 'profit'. This is just cheap petty deception of the public, that left the essentials unchanged.

The Zia regime seemed to have reached a dead end by the mid-eighties. Its strident rhetoric about the Islamic basis of the Pakistan ideology had failed to give it the basis of legitimacy that it had so desperately sought. Unhappily for that regime, its problems were compounded because its rhetoric had the effect of raising hopes of some naive ideologists and Islamic fundamentalists, which it was in no position to fulfil. Its bigoted supporters began to get disillusioned and even began to voice criticism of the regime that has so far protected and patronised them and which they had so faithfully supported. Zia realised that he had to change tack.

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